

**THE 1963 REPORT OF THE CALIFORNIA SENATE FACTFINDING  
SUBCOMMITTEE ON UN-AMERICAN ACTIVITIES RE: THE JOHN BIRCH SOCIETY**

**An Analysis and Rebuttal to Assertions Made by JBS Author Alex Newman -- rev. July 2020**

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For decades, John Birch Society members and supporters and writers (like Alex Newman) have cited this 1963 California legislative report as definitive and supposedly indisputable evidence about the Birch Society's purported inclusiveness and its rejection of any sort of religious or racial bigotry.

Alex Newman is the Birch Society's most prolific contemporary writer. He often addresses the subject of racism and anti-Semitism when it is raised concerning the Birch Society.

I am going to devote considerable space to discussing this matter because of the grave errors in both historical fact and interpretation which Alex Newman has made.

**This Report is divided into three sections:**

1. Section 1 is an analysis and rebuttal to statements made by Mr. Newman in 2017 and 2019
2. Section 2 will present excerpts from the 1963 California Report which Birchers never get around to reporting
3. Section 3 will present excerpts from the 1965 California Subcommittee Report which updated the Subcommittee's findings in 1963 regarding the Birch Society

**SECTION 1 = ANALYSIS AND REBUTTAL TO STATEMENTS MADE BY ALEX NEWMAN**

I originally wrote an abbreviated version of this *Report* in response to false or misleading assertions made by Mr. Newman appearing in his December 2019 article at the link below which repeats similar statements made by Mr. Newman in September 2017 (link also below):

**2019**

<https://www.thenewamerican.com/usnews/politics/item/34284-neocon-tobin-dupes-ny-post-haaretz-readers-on-birch-society>

**2017**

<https://www.thenewamerican.com/usnews/politics/item/26871-wapo-white-supremacist-buckley-defines-respectable-right>

Birchers like Mr. Newman never perform the necessary due diligence about the California legislative investigation and subsequent *Report*. Instead, they artfully select a few excerpts from the 1963 *Report* which they consider highly favorable to the JBS while, simultaneously, they totally suppress all of the derogatory conclusions and statements made in the 1963 *Report* and they never even mention what the Subcommittee concluded in its subsequent 1965 *Report*.

In addition, Birchers like Mr. Newman deliberately omit all of the relevant background concerning the methodology employed by the California Subcommittee.

### ALEX NEWMAN'S BIAS

It also should be pointed out that to the extent that mistaken or unfair conclusions have been made about the JBS currently or in the past, Mr. Newman never considers the possibility that such errors are primarily because the Birch Society does not allow outside independent scholars and researchers to have access to JBS historical archives---including, for example, the personal papers and correspondence of JBS founder Robert Welch or any documentation concerning internal JBS disputes or controversies or any background information about JBS members and paid Coordinators as well as their contacts with JBS HQ.

Below is the most pertinent excerpt from Mr. Newman's 2017 article.

I have inserted numbers in [brackets] at various points in his commentary which will be discussed in my analysis which appears underneath Newman's remarks.

*"Beyond that history, even official investigations have concluded the obvious. In a 1963 report that is available online, a California Senate Fact-Finding Committee concluded after a two-year investigation [1] that not only was the Society not racist or anti-Semitic, it specifically opposed racism and anti-Semitism. [2] 'Among other unjustified criticisms against the society is the charge that it is anti-Semitic,' the report found, noting that JBS was working with prominent Jewish groups to 'squelch' anti-Semitism. 'Our investigation leads us to the opposite conclusion. The organization is open to people of all religions, all races, all political persuasions except those deemed subversive.' [3A and 3B]*

*"In fact, Jewish Birchers quoted in the official report said they felt more welcome in The John Birch Society than in American society at large. 'It has been my experience, as a member of a so-called minority group, that I have felt in the society a very great sense of mutual co-operation and respect – a conviction of belonging far above the actual circumstance to be found in daily life outside the society,' Jerome E. Linz, a Jewish member of JBS from Southern California, was quoted as saying in the 1963 California report."*

*"The California Senate's report also noted that across the state, there were 'many Jews on Birch committees,' and 'many in the society.' [4A thru 4E] Some members, the report added, 'have been asked to resign because they were found to be disruptive with their anti-Semitic attitude.' [5A and 5B] The investigators also concluded that Welch 'has already acted to oust anti-Semites from the movement.' The real excommunicator of anti-Semites, then, was Welch." [6]*

*"The California investigation's conclusions were unequivocal. [7] 'At any rate, our investigations have disclosed no evidence of anti-Semitism on the part of anyone connected with the John Birch Society in California, and much evidence to the effect that it opposes racism in all forms,' the investigators said." [8]*

### ANALYSIS

[1] Mr. Newman couldn't even get his basic facts correct. The Subcommittee's investigation commenced after the close of the California legislative session in June 1961. The first draft of the Subcommittee's Report was written in April 1962. Thus, the "investigation" consumed some portion of ten months (not as Newman claimed "two-years"). What Newman is referring to is that the publication of the California

Senate Subcommittee Report was in June 1963 (for reasons which I will discuss later in this *Report*).

Also, Mr. Newman refers to “**official investigations**” (plural) as if there have been other “**official investigations**” of the JBS besides the California legislative one – but that is NOT the case. The California legislative investigation was the only official investigation.

[2] The quality, validity, and credibility of any report or study (regardless of its subject matter) depends upon its methodology as well as on candidly recognizing its inherent limitations in terms of time, place, scope, and potential bias. **Birchers like Alex Newman never discuss any of these factors because doing so would undermine and diminish their arguments.**

One of the first issues that must be addressed is what evidence did the Subcommittee rely upon to make its conclusions? For example:

- Did the Subcommittee expect JBS members who had (or who were influenced by) racial or religious bias to acknowledge it openly?
- How did the Subcommittee determine that the JBS “**opposed racism and anti-Semitism**”? Nobody knows because the Subcommittee is silent on this subject.

What methods did the Subcommittee use to determine whether or not there was racial or religious bias within the JBS?

- For example: why didn’t the Subcommittee even mention that at least 4 members of the JBS National Council (its governing body) were life-long segregationists?
- Why didn’t the Subcommittee acknowledge that senior officials of white supremacy organizations such as the White Citizens Council movement were JBS members and even became JBS Coordinators or paid writers for JBS publications? Aren’t they racists?
- Why didn’t the Subcommittee know that a very prominent member of the JBS (Dr. Thomas Parker of Greenville SC) was a member of his local Citizens Council chapter **AND** Dr. Parker signed a statement in October 1956 which announced why he (and others) became independent electors for the forthcoming Presidential election (quoted below):
- The independent electors placed an ad in South Carolina newspapers which explained their platform as follows:  
“**We believe in the time-honored and cherished traditions and customs of the South and are opposed to any legislation, movement, or policy which seeks to destroy or impair them. We believe in and demand social and educational separation of the races. We are opposed to and will not accept integration, gradual or otherwise. There can be no integration without destroying both races.**” [Florence SC Morning News, 10/7/56, p 10].
- Why didn’t the Subcommittee know about the JBS members and financial supporters and endorsers who were also financial contributors to, and endorsers of, Gerald L.K. Smith’s racist and anti-Semitic Christian

Nationalist Crusade - including, California JBS National Council member, Paul H. Talbert?

- Why didn't the Subcommittee know that Robert Welch recommended two anti-Semitic publications: Merwin K. Hart's *Economic Council Letter* and Russell Maguire's *American Mercury* magazine?
- Why didn't the Subcommittee know that JBS National Council member and JBS founding member, Revilo P. Oliver, was a featured speaker in February 1961 along with Kenneth Goff, a notorious anti-Semite, at the Midwest Christian Patriots Convention in St. Louis MO? Then, in April 1961, Oliver addressed the annual convention of Kenneth Goff's organization, "Soldiers of the Cross" at the Raleigh Hotel in Washington DC? Goff was an organizer for Gerald L.K. Smith's Christian Nationalist Crusade and he often was Smith's featured speaker at CNC events. In August 1950, the Special Agent in Charge of the FBI's Denver field office wrote a memo to Director J. Edgar Hoover which stated that: "**Goff is generally regarded as a border-line psychopathic case...**" [FBI-HQ 62-80382, serial #5, 8/8/50 SAC Denver to Hoover]. This is the same Revilo Oliver whom former FBI informant Herbert Philbrick told the FBI in January 1961 "**was an extremist in anti-Communist feelings and violently anti-Semitic**" and Philbrick based his description upon his contacts with Oliver in 1959! [FBI-HQ file 65-45027, serial #29, 2/1/61 memo from F.J. Baumgardner to Assistant Director Alan H. Belmont, page 2 which is FBI file on Revilo P. Oliver; also, in JBS HQ file 62-104401, unrecorded but just after serial #621]

[3A] What does the Subcommittee mean by its comment that the JBS was "**working with**" prominent Jewish groups? JBS founder Robert Welch and other JBS officials repeatedly stated that they considered most prominent Jewish organizations to be Communist-influenced or controlled.

In February 1961, Welch wrote a letter to Dr. Lawrence A. Lacey of Madison, Wisconsin wherein Welch declared:

**"Since I have twice been threatened by an agent of the ADL, because of the supposedly 'anti-Semitic' composition of some of my Committees, and since I have just asked the very man to whom the ADL objected most (Merwin Hart) to go on my Committee of Endorsers and he has accepted, your charge of cowardice against me seems a bit unkind."** [Robert Welch to Dr. Lawrence Lacey, 2/10/61, page 1].

So, despite what the California Subcommittee wrote, it seems that there was not a good working relationship between Welch/JBS and the pre-eminent Jewish organization in the U.S. which monitored and fought against racial and religious bigotry within American society, i.e. the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith.

With respect to Merwin K. Hart, whom Welch mentions in his letter to Dr. Lacey:

Hart was not just a JBS endorser. Hart formed and led the first JBS chapter in New York City. The FBI's HQ file about Merwin Hart presents a totally different picture

for making judgments about Robert Welch's commitment to keeping the JBS free of any taint of bigotry.

In the November 1960 *JBS Bulletin*, Robert Welch endorsed Merwin K. Hart's "*Economic Council Letter*" which Welch described as: "This is a newsletter published twice a month by the National Economic Council...It is a compact source of penetrating information and incisive opinion presented with complete accuracy but always from the Americanist point of view."

The December 1938 "calendar of events" for Allen Zoll's organization, American Patriots Inc. (API) shows it sponsoring a speech by Merwin K. Hart on 12/16/38.

The FBI-New Haven file summary on API reported:

"This group became notorious for its anti-Semitic, anti-Communist and pro-totalitarian reputation. During 1938, weekly meetings were held at the Iroquois Hotel, New York City, at which times the following individuals known for their anti-Semitic or Fascist tendencies were present: Joseph McWilliams, Elizabeth Dilling, Gerald L.K. Smith, Adam Kunze (NY State Secretary KKK), James Wheeler Hill (German American Bund), George S. Viereck, Mrs. Leslie Fry, Col. Eugene N. Sanctuary." [FBI-New Haven field report dated 4/12/43 which is in FBI-HQ file 100-138356, serial #10, page 3].

Another FBI report observed:

"Information available in the file reflects that Zoll has a long record of anti-Semitism and that he was the organizer of American Patriots, Inc., which was listed by the Attorney General as a fascist organization." [FBI-HQ 62-87760, serial #24, 4/10/50 SAC New York City to J. Edgar Hoover].

In a 1949 Report entitled "*Subversive Activities of Hate Groups*" published by the Americanism Commission, Department of Illinois American Legion, which was entered into Congressional Record 10/6/49, the Legion observed:

"Last year we presented Merwin K. Hart of the National Economic Council as a hate propagandist---those who reason in the manner of the National Economic Council are, whether they know it or not, selling out to the Communist Party."

In 1950, the House Select Committee on Lobbying Activities (aka the Buchanan Committee) investigated Hart's organization, National Economic Council. The Committee's Report stated:

"One of the National Economic Council's techniques, for example, is to disparage those who oppose its objectives by appeals to religious prejudice, often ill-concealed anti-Semitism"

The March 13, 1958 *Economic Council Letter* published by Merwin Hart reported that:

"It is apparent that left-wing Jews, working in close conjunction with Communists, are largely responsible for this so-called integration decision of the Supreme Court of 5-17-54."

One FBI summary memo about Hart and his organization made the following observations. "*Bufiles*" refers to FBI files aka Bureau files.

"Bufiles reflect he was the subject of a security type investigation conducted between 1942 to April 1948, New York origin. This revealed he was pro-Fascist, pro-Franco, and was

sympathetic to America First Group...Hart has been President of the National Economic Council, Inc. since it was founded in 1930...The organization has been described as strongly pro-Franco and 'fascist'. It also has been termed as violently anti-labor and has made reckless attacks against the United Nations." [FBI-HQ 100-128996, serial #127]

In February 1950, the conservative magazine, *Plain Talk*, published an article by Don Levine which stated that Hart's National Economic Council "is in the business of merchandising anti-Semitism. And, he wraps his contraband in packages bearing the labels of free enterprise, anti-Communism and Christian love." [Don Levine: "The Strange Case of Merwin K. Hart", *Plain Talk*, February 1950, pages 1-8]

Among Hart's "penetrating information and incisive opinion presented with complete accuracy but always from the Americanist point of view" was this observation:

"Is it not likely that many of these 6 million claimed to have been killed by Hitler and Eichmann, are right here in the U.S. and are joining in the agitation for more and more support for the State of Israel--even if the American Republic goes down?" [Boston MA *Globe*, 7/4/65, page 4; FBI-Boston 100-32899, serial #346]

Incidentally, two JBS National Council members were on the Board of Directors of Hart's National Economic Council (i.e. Ralph E. Davis of Los Angeles in 1955 and Spruille Braden of New York in 1958).

[3B] The California Subcommittee does not report any of the available data from other locations which indicates that the JBS had many bigotry-related internal problems.

For example, consider the following two reports by Tacoma WA JBS member Virginia Shackelford and notice, especially, the second report's reference to "six months ago" which refers to August 1961:

2/2/63 = *Seattle Times*, p25 "Woman Quits Birchers on Jewish Issue":

"My membership was revoked by the national headquarters in Belmont MA, Mrs. Shackelford said. Three of the five units in Tacoma, representing about 30 members, have dissolved within the past two months Mrs. Shackelford declared. Mrs. Shackelford said she and the others left the society over the distribution of anti-semitic literature (primarily in the Kent area) and the failure of the national organization to order the practice halted."

2/13/63, *Tacoma News-Tribune*: "Virginia Shackelford Out of Birch Society":

"Mrs. Virginia Shackelford, one of the most outspoken and prominent members of the JBS in the Pacific Northwest has been drummed out of the ultra-conservative organization. The break she said today results from vigorous objection she raised with national headquarters over the distribution of anti-semitic literature by several members in the Kent area. Mrs. Shackelford said her dispute with national headquarters started with a letter she wrote six months ago to Robert Welch the society's founder protesting the pamphlets and other material of anti-semitic nature. In her letter, she said, Mrs. Shackelford requested that the persons in question be asked to resign. Last Friday, she said, she received a letter from national headquarters in Belmont MA telling her that her membership had been revoked."

David Harmon was a full-time paid Coordinator for the JBS covering Iowa, Wisconsin and Minnesota. In May 1961, Harmon told a meeting of a JBS chapter in Bloomington



MN that “even if most Jews are Communists, there are still a lot of good ones.” [Minneapolis MN Star, 5/20/61].

[4A] This quotation from the Subcommittee’s Report is directly contradicted by Robert Welch himself on two different levels!

Keep in mind the time-frame we are talking about, i.e. the Subcommittee’s investigation started in June 1961 and continued until April 1962.

Now, consider the following April 1962 letter by Robert Welch to Verne Kaub which repeats sentiments that Welch previously wrote to Dr. Lawrence A. Lacey in February 1961:

“Actually, and I am sorry to say, we do not have too many Jews in the JBS. This is partly because a smaller percentage of the Jewish people in America as a whole are true conservatives, than of the total population. But it is even more because of the greater pressures and dirtier pressures, which are put on them, against standing up for what they believe...But when you get into the Zionist picture, I repeat that you cannot think any less of the whole government of Israel or of the whole Zionist conspiracy than I do; except that I think its relative importance in the total importance in the whole picture has greatly decreased over the past three decades. Some day...I should be glad to exchange views with you...as to what has really taken place since around 1905 when I think the Zionist conspiracy -- and from then on for perhaps two decades --- was practically the father of the International Communist Conspiracy. Today I personally think that the relationship is almost exactly reversed, and that the child had now so far outgrown the parent in size and strength and importance that the parent is in a relatively minor position. But this does not make Golda Meir or Ben-Gurion or any of their extremist followers in this country any less culpable...” [Robert Welch letter to Verne Kaub dated April 4, 1962. Also see same sentiments expressed in a February 10, 1961 Welch letter to Dr. Lawrence A. Lacey of Madison WI.]

Even in 1965, the Eastern Regional Director of the JBS (Thomas J. Davis) acknowledged to a North Carolina newspaper about the percentage makeup of the JBS that: “...as Mr. Welch says humorously, about 60 percent Protestant, 40 percent Catholic and one percent Jewish, which he admits adds up to 101 percent, but that means we have very few Jews—though the ones we have are fine people, good members...The Society also has a few Negro members” [8/19/65 Charlotte NC Observer article entitled “Birch Society Public Relations Man Comes Here to Seek Members”; FBI-Charlotte 100-9548, serial 142].

[4B] Many of the most prominent “Jews” in the JBS were non-observant and had no connection to the Jewish institutions within their communities.

One also has to wonder how many men and women of the Jewish faith would be receptive to joining an organization whose leader not only wrote about a “Zionist conspiracy” as the “*father of the International Communist Conspiracy*” but also someone who had expressed such hostility toward the government of Israel?

[4C] In Welch’s February 1961 letter to Dr. Lawrence A. Lacey of Madison, WI, Welch stated that “...Jews were preponderant in the top levels of the Communist hierarchy” AND “...there are today entirely too many people calling themselves Jews who are high up in the Communist conspiracy...”.

That alleged degree of Jewish participation within “**top levels**” of the CPUSA certainly was never seen within the “top levels” of the JBS!

Alfred Kohlberg was on the JBS National Council for just three months when he died in early April 1960.

[4D] One has to comment upon another aspect of Robert Welch’s observation about Jews being “**preponderant in the top levels of the Communist hierarchy**”.

There were probably 20 or 30 times as many Jews and African Americans in the Communist Party USA as there were in the JBS --- including many who were in senior Party leadership positions. [For example: Benjamin Davis Jr. was Editor of the CPUSA newspaper, *The Daily Worker*, and he also served on the CPUSA National Board. Henry Winston was Chairman of the CPUSA from 1966-1986 and Pettis Perry was Chairman of the California Communist Party].

But no serious observer believes that anti-Semitism or racism (aka “*white chauvinism*”) did not exist in the CPUSA just because the Party elevated African Americans and Jews into leadership positions. In 1952, Pettis Perry published a pamphlet entitled “*White Chauvinism and the Struggle for Peace*” which discussed the Party’s internal problems with racial prejudice.

In fact, several African American FBI informants within the CPUSA (*who later became JBS members!*) stated that racism (aka “*white chauvinism*”) was rampant within the CPUSA! [See statements by African American JBS members such as Julia Brown and Lola Belle Holmes.]

Consequently, stating that some group “**is open to people of all religions, all races, all political persuasions**” OR referring to specific membership numbers by race or religion OR referring to percentages of particular demographic groups within such organizations are generally meaningless.

The underlying values and practices within the organization along with its official ideology and its public policy positions determine whether or not bigotry overtly or covertly exists or is tolerated within that organization. **Unfortunately, the JBS comes up short in terms of values, beliefs, and behavior. See 4E.**

[4E] When an organization welcomes bigots into its ranks OR when it uses the publications of its group to promote or sanitize racist arguments or racial stereotypes, OR when it adopts arguments that were first created by bigots OR when it invites bigots to participate in its official events as featured speakers or as writers for its publications AND when the organization cannot bring itself to expel well-known racial or religious bigots (especially from its leadership positions), then no amount of window-dressing, or references to token examples of minorities being members of the group, makes any material difference.

[5A] In February 1963, the Western District Governor of the JBS (John Rousselot) stated in reply to criticism from a California Republican Party official that:



**“We’ve asked only one-half of 1% of our entire membership to leave who were anti-Semitic or anti-Negro. I know of at least three chapters that were disbanded and re-organized because there had been tendencies toward anti-Semitic discussions.”**  
[Los Angeles Times, 02/21/63, page A-1, **“Rousselot Raps Hall in Birch Row”**]

If Rousselot’s comment about the JBS expelling bigots was a reference to the entire country, then based upon the total amount of dues payments which the JBS received in 1963, the JBS apparently had approximately 17,000 members which would calculate to about 85 JBS members that were expelled for bigotry.

A JBS chapter normally had between 10 and 20 members so his reference to **“at least 3 chapters”** would calculate to about 30 to 60 expelled members.

**However**, Rousselot was obviously referring only to members whose activities were considered problematic at their local chapter level. At no time did the JBS consider expelling its senior leaders who were racists (such as its paid Coordinators or its National Council members who were life-long segregationists. See more details below in item #5B).

**[5B]** There is additional data to consider which tends to falsify what Rousselot reported in February 1963. That new information comes from JBS founder, Robert Welch!

In 1963, Welch gave a speech entitled **“The Neutralizers”**, which subsequently was published as a pamphlet. In his speech, Welch explained what he described as a **“Communist strategy”** that promoted **“divisiveness in all of their opposition”**.

Welch then continued his analysis by stating that his speech transcript was intended to **“deal with the current application of that strategy to the John Birch Society.”**  
[Robert Welch, *The Neutralizers*, 1963, page 1].

According to Welch, the purpose behind his remarks was to describe the various types of **“ideological wedges”** supposedly used by Communists to neutralize their opposition:

**“The objective for which they are used is to pull members right out of the Society onto some one of several narrowly restricted courses for opposing the Communist menace; or to get members so pre-occupied with some one approach to the problem that, even if they remain in the Society, they become innocuous passengers at best and increasingly disruptive disputants at worst.”** [*The Neutralizers*, page 2]

Welch then discusses what he describes as **“seven different ‘philosophies’ or ‘arguments’ or ‘programs’ which are used to bring about these various forms of neutralization.”** [*The Neutralizers*, page 3].

The very first **“wedge”** mentioned by Welch (and apparently it was the most significant one because it is by far the lengthiest discussion by Welch) is captioned **“Anti-Semitism”**.

**Pages 3 thru 11** are devoted to just this one “wedge” or argument or program.

Welch discusses an anti-semite whom he identified only as “*Mr. A*” whom Welch described as “*he was well and widely known in the area as a leading and dedicated member*” of the JBS who “*was a frequent visitor at the meetings of about a dozen chapters*” and this JBS member had “*pulled some twenty to thirty of our hardest working and most determined anti-Communists right out of the Society, wrecked our chapter altogether and left a couple other chapters in a badly disorganized condition.*” [*The Neutralizers*, page 3]

So, contrary to Rousselot’s estimate of perhaps a total of 85 members nationally who were expelled for bigotry, by contrast, according to Welch’s description, in just ONE incident, there was an anti-semitic bigot (who was “*a leading member*” of the JBS in his area) who “*neutralized*” 20-30 members in one JBS chapter and then he went on to leave a couple other JBS chapters (perhaps another 20-40 members) “*badly disorganized*” due to his anti-Semitic sentiments. This fellow also was a frequent visitor at meetings of about a dozen other chapters!

One has to wonder just what kind of people all those dozens of JBS members were to begin with – since they found the JBS so appealing but they were so easily lured away from the JBS (and “neutralized” by an anti-semitic pitch? Welch, however, described them as merely “*innocent but gullible patriots*”.

Perhaps a more realistic estimate of the scope of the problem confronted by the JBS can be seen in a 1971 JBS publication, [*It's Time to Come Home*]. In it, Robert Welch wrote that:

“*There are more than 50,000 people who joined the JBS at some time during the past 12 years who are no longer members...About 1000 did not prove to be desirable members. They were asked to resign and their names have been removed from our dormant list.*”

[6] It is misleading to claim that Welch ousted bigots from the JBS. First of all, he invited many of them to become JBS members, JBS endorsers, JBS Coordinators, or JBS writers and speakers, in the first place.

[Examples include: Selma AL Sheriff James G. Clark, Rev. Ferrell Griswold, Gordon “Jack” Mohr, Eric Dudley Butler, Medford B. Evans, Revilo P. Oliver, Thomas J. Anderson, Austin J. App, Verne P. Kaub, A.G. Heinsohn Jr., T. Coleman Andrews Sr., Delmar Dennis, Kent Steffgen, James P. Lucier, Dr. Thomas Parker, Paul H. Talbert, Cong. John R. Rarick, – to name just a few.]

That is why life-long segregationists were appointed by Welch to the JBS National Council.

That also explains why Welch hired well-known racists and anti-Semites as paid writers and speakers for the JBS.

[7] “*Unequivocal*” does not mean very much if the methodology of the California Subcommittee Report was flawed to begin with! See all comments above and below concerning erroneous statements made by the Subcommittee.

[8] This “*no evidence*” comment must be evaluated in the context of what methodology was employed by the Subcommittee:

(A) First, the Subcommittee limited its investigation to California within a specific limited time period.

It should also be remembered that during that time period, very few JBS members publicly acknowledged their membership.

In addition: The Subcommittee did not have access to any internal JBS documents – such as correspondence from members or from JBS paid staff or reports by JBS members or Coordinators concerning bigotry in their chapters or in their geographic locations. The Subcommittee also apparently was not aware of media reports published outside of California.

(B) Second, the Subcommittee based its conclusions upon a very small sample of JBS members (about 90) who submitted affidavits. Nobody even knows how that small sample was selected **OR** whether or not that sample was even representative of the JBS membership in California or nationally.

(C) Third, self-reporting by a very small group of members is the poorest and most unreliable method of surveying a membership, particularly when an analyst cannot even determine if the sample being studied is representative of the organization as a whole or perhaps just pertains to one particular limited area or perhaps pertains to one limited segment of the membership (such as mostly younger or newer members).

Also: how did the Subcommittee determine whether or not those JBS members were being candid about their personal opinions or their experiences within the JBS?

If (for example) members had seen or overheard some bigoted comments by other JBS members, or by their local JBS leaders, would those reporting members have candidly acknowledged what they saw or heard OR given the massive prevailing controversy about the JBS, would they want the Subcommittee to only hear favorable information about the makeup of the Birch Society?

(D) Fourth, the Subcommittee was totally oblivious to all the indisputable factual evidence which contradicted their conclusions – and, significantly, in 1965, the Subcommittee updated its *Report* to reflect some of that new information (as will be seen below).

For example: there is absolutely NO evidence that the California Subcommittee ever performed even the most perfunctory investigation into the background of the JBS National Council members.

If they had done so, they certainly would have noticed that at least 4 (and probably 5) JBS National Council members were life-long segregationists! They might also have discovered that California JBS National Council member Paul Talbert was a major financial contributor to Gerald L.K. Smith as were other JBS members.

Also, one has to wonder why the Subcommittee was totally silent about the erroneous JBS position on race-related matters which contradicted what the Subcommittee itself had clearly reported in its 1961 Report (as follows):

**“The Communist Party in this country has, from its inception, endeavored to attract Negroes to its ranks. At one stage of its existence the Party even undertook to establish a Negro nation in the deep South and through its Southern Conference for Human Welfare made an all-out effort to recruit large numbers of the Negro people. This attempt, like the Communist attempt to penetrate and control the N.A.A.C.P., resulted in failure.”** [*Eleventh Report of the California Senate Fact-Finding Subcommittee on Un-American Activities*, 1961, page 136].

**BY CONTRAST:** Robert Welch and the Birch Society were circulating arguments which falsely claimed that the Communist Party USA position in 1961 was to create a **“Negro Soviet Republic”** in our southern states. In reality, that Party position was discarded in 1959 (according to FBI Director Hoover).

Also, the JBS was disseminating falsehoods concerning the loyalty/patriotism of the leadership of our national civil rights organizations.

Apparently, the California Subcommittee never even considered the possibility that the explanation for why the Birch Society was receptive to, and accepted, and then circulated all this false information was because it was merely repeating propaganda it received which originated with white supremacist organizations (such as the White Citizens Councils).

Significantly two of the three top leaders of the Citizens Councils of America (William J. Simmons and Louis W. Hollis) and the Editor of its national magazine (Medford Evans) were all JBS members and Hollis and Evans had served as JBS Coordinators!

### **SOME BACKGROUND REGARDING THE CALIFORNIA SUBCOMMITTEE INVESTIGATION**

The first thing to understand about the California Senate investigation and report (hereafter referred to as “CSR”, i.e. the **C**alifornia **S**enate **R**eport) is why and how it began.

On March 15, 1961, California Governor Edmund G. (Pat) Brown announced that California was **“looking into the activities of the John Birch Society in California”**. [*Los Angeles Times*, 3/15/61, page 2, *“State Probing Birch Society, Brown Says”*]. BTW, this is the same Governor Brown whom Robert Welch described to his National Council in January 1960 as **“almost certainly an actual Communist”**.

On Tuesday, March 21, 1961, the Chairman of the Subcommittee (State Senator Hugh M. Burns) announced that his Subcommittee had been monitoring the JBS for several months, but it had no plans to conduct hearings into the JBS or to ask JBS members to testify.

However, Burns added that his Subcommittee had seen enough evidence to ascertain that the JBS was attempting to **“upset our democratic processes”**. [*Los Angeles Times*, 3/22/61, page 2, *“State Senators Watch JBS”*]

That same day, Governor Brown declared that he intended to meet with California Attorney General Stanley Mosk to discuss Mosk’s preliminary report on the JBS. Gov. Brown also observed that as long as the JBS did not violate any laws, **“they have a right to take any position they want.”** [*Los Angeles Times*, March 26, 1961, page 9, *“State Senators Watch John Birch Society”*].

For details concerning what California Attorney General Stanley Mosk reported to Governor Brown, see Mosk's article entitled ***"The Birch Phenomenon Analyzed"*** which was published in the *New York Times* on Sunday, August 20, 1961, in NYT Magazine section, pages 88-90.

On Wednesday, March 22, 1961, JBS founder Robert Welch sent a telegram to Governor Brown with a copy to Senator Burns requesting an investigation of the JBS by the Burns Subcommittee.

Birch Society National Council member Paul H. Talbert of Beverly Hills, California released Welch's telegram to the UPI wire service. The next day, Senator Burns sent a telegram to Robert Welch stating that his Subcommittee planned to invite Welch to appear sometime after the close of the current legislative session in June 1961. Senator Burns also issued a press release which pointed out that:

**"Any movement, from the unbalanced right or the unbalanced left, which tears the country apart by rumor, slander, fear and doubt must necessarily be suspect."** [1963 CSR, page 2]

On March 23, 1961, Paul Talbert objected to the delay mentioned by Sen. Burns. Talbert inquired **"If the danger from our Society is so imminent as some people have said, why not start the Senate hearing now? We want a chance to state our views now. Why not hold the hearing in the cool of the spring instead of waiting for the heat of the summer?"**

Talbert was especially concerned about allegations which linked the JBS to fascism. There will be more details regarding Talbert's role in this matter below. [*Los Angeles Times*, March 24, 1961, page 10, ***"Delay in Birch Society Investigation Protested"***]

**NOTE:** A miniscule number of JBS critics attempted to link the JBS with fascism or neo-nazism. The only reason that assertion even came up for consideration is because of

- (a) statements made by Robert Welch in the *JBS Blue Book* which expressed his hostility toward and scorn for democratic institutions and his contempt for our national leaders
- (b) Welch's preference for a monolithic structure for the JBS with Welch as its authoritarian leader
- (c) the Birch Society's strident opposition to internationalism as represented by the United Nations and NATO
- (d) the involvement of some senior JBS members with the most extreme elements within the U.S.

**For example:** JBS National Council member Paul Talbert was a financial contributor to one of the most virulent and well-known racists and anti-semites in U.S. history, i.e. Gerald L.K. Smith's Christian Nationalist Crusade! According to records filed with the Clerk of the U.S. House of Representatives, Talbert contributed \$150 to Gerald L.K. Smith in 1959 (equivalent to about \$1326 in today's dollars.)

On Saturday, April 9, 1961, Senator Burns announced that his Subcommittee would begin its hearings into the JBS after the legislature adjourned in June 1961. He also stated that the scope of his investigation was limited to finding out if the JBS was **"tied to a foreign ideology"** or based upon any **"master race theory"**. He also declared that the Subcommittee was **"interested only in finding out whether the John Birch Society is un-American. If we find the John Birch Society is tied to a foreign ideology and advocating the forcible overthrow of the government, we will conclude it is un-American."**

Burns also noted that some people wanted his Subcommittee to investigate the JBS only **"to see if it is safe to join"** but that, Burns observed, was not the purpose of his Subcommittee because that would **"make us the big brotherhood type of a clearinghouse"** for all organizations. [*Los Angeles Times*, April 9, 1961, page A, ***"State Senate Group to Probe Birch Society"***]

**NOTE:** IF the purpose of the Burns Committee investigation was actually only to determine if the JBS was tied to some foreign ideology or advocating the forcible overthrow of our

government, then there was no need to even begin such an investigation because it was manifestly NOT guilty of either assertion and no serious critic was even claiming that it was.

Clearly, the predominant criticism of the JBS from its inception was based exclusively upon Robert Welch's absurd and malicious statements regarding the purported disloyalty of President Eisenhower and the alleged disloyalty of many of the cabinet-level officials in Eisenhower's Administration (along with Welch's hostility toward U.S. Supreme Court Chief Justice Earl Warren) plus Welch's statements in the 1959 *JBS Blue Book* regarding the supposed dire current status of our internal security.

The CSR released in June 1963 clearly was intended to address a much larger issue which Burns correctly identified when his Subcommittee's report was published, namely, was the JBS tearing our country apart by rumors, slander, fear, doubt, and circulation of false and inflammatory statements?

#### Historical footnote which Alex Newman will NEVER report:

The *Sacramento CA Union* newspaper ran a multi-article series on political extremism in U.S. history from October 8 thru October 16, 1964 and then the paper published a 10-part series of articles about the JBS from October 18 thru October 27, 1964. [Those articles are now online on my webpage at: <https://archive.org/details/sacramentounion1964seriesofnewspaperarticlesonextremismu.s.history> ]

As part of that JBS series, the *Union* reprinted excerpts from a February 14, 1964 interview of California State Senator Hugh M. Burns, (the Chairman of the California Subcommittee) about the Subcommittee's 1963 Report on the JBS -- because JBS members and supporters (like Alex Newman) FALSELY claimed that the CSR "*exonerated*" the JBS.

Burns declared during his February 1964 interview that:

**"The John Birch Society definitely does not have any endorsement whatsoever from the California Legislature. If a person gets the Report, he should read it in its entirety, including the part critical of the Birch leader, Robert Welch."**

Burns added that the JBS **"is an extremist group, and like extremist groups from time immemorial, plagues our country. Extremists from the Know-Nothings on have served no useful purpose."**

When Senator Burns was informed about the *Union's* October 1964 series of articles, he offered a new statement--which Birchers like Alex Newman should read:

**"Some persons have attempted to use the Report of the Senate Factfinding Subcommittee on Un-American Activities as a whitewash of the John Birch Society. It was never so intended."**

**"As I have stated before, the Report is highly critical of Robert Welch, making mention of his historical ignorance, his belonging to an organization started by Fabian Socialists, his organizing the Society along Communist lines, and his extreme statements against distinguished Americans. Since the Report was first prepared, other information has been brought to our attention which material--until further investigated and reported--makes highly undesirable and improper, any use of the Subcommittee's name for seeming exoneration of the John Birch Society."** [*Sacramento CA Union*, 10/25/64, pages 1 and 5 which is Part 8 of a 10-part series of articles on the JBS. Part 8 is captioned "*No Birch Whitewash; Anti-Semitism Exists.*"]

BTW, Burns was a Reagan Democrat. He retired from the California Senate in 1970 after 34 years in office. He then campaigned for Governor Reagan's re-election and he was appointed by Reagan to the state Alcoholic Beverage Control Appeals Board.



The Subcommittee's Chief Counsel (Richard Ennis Combs) told the *Los Angeles Times* during a 1967 interview that:

**"Combs considers emotional insecurity the major factor that draws people to extremist organizations, whether of the right or the left. 'A person attracted to the Birch Society or the KKK or Black Muslims or the Progressive Labor Party...usually feels rejected. He has resentments. His observations necessarily suffer from emotional distortion' says Combs."** [*Los Angeles Times*, 04/02/67, pA33 = *"California's Lonely Secret Agent"* by Mary Ellen Leary]:

Burns also told the *Los Angeles Times* about his Subcommittee's 1963 JBS Report that: **"I don't think it gave the Birch Society a clear bill of health. It's an extremist group and that's not healthy."** [*Los Angeles Times*, 06/26/63, page A-1, *"Brown Denies Holding Up Birch Society Report"*]

That same predicate is what motivated the FBI to begin its preliminary inquiry into the JBS in mid-1959 and 1960.

Once the FBI determined that the JBS was an anti-Communist organization that attracted support from prominent Americans in all walks of life, the FBI quickly concluded that the JBS was not subversive, but it was an example of a **"right-wing extremist"** organization that was **"irrational"** and **"irresponsible"** and, therefore, it was producing hysteria within our country and impeding legitimate anti-Communist activities. The Burns Committee (as will be seen) arrived at the same conclusion.

In September 1962, Paul Talbert re-entered the debate by claiming that a critical report about the JBS by California Attorney General Stanley Mosk **"smeared"** the Society by linking the JBS to such groups as the KKK and American Nazi Party which Talbert described as **"the vilest form of the guilty-by-association tactic"**.

Talbert then made a rather astonishing statement.

Talbert said that the Burns Subcommittee Report would vindicate the JBS. Furthermore, according to Talbert, the CSR **"will prove beyond doubt that the Birch Society is an honest, open, patriotic organization made up of good Americans who believe in God, in law and order and in the Constitution of the United States."** [*Los Angeles Times*, September 19, 1962, page 22, *"Mosk Accused of 'Smearing' Birch Society"*]

The Chief Counsel of the Burns Subcommittee (Richard Ennis Combs) completed the first draft of the Subcommittee Report in early April 1962. That first draft was then sent to Chairman Hugh Burns for his review. This begs the question: How did Paul Talbert know (in September 1962) what conclusions were reached by the Subcommittee - **when that Report was NOT publicly available until the summer of 1963?**

#### **The answer is as follows:**

The first draft was completed April 1, 1962. However, that same week, one Subcommittee member died, and another was hospitalized. The California Senate adjourned before the Subcommittee (including one new member) could vote upon authorizing release of the Report. However, Paul Talbert obtained an advance copy.

On May 17, 1962, Talbert sent a letter to fellow JBS National Council member Cola G. Parker of Neenah WI with carbon copies to all other JBS National Council members. In his letter to Cola Parker, Talbert observed:

"I am convinced the report is good and too favorable to the John Birch Society. The natural conclusion is that it was too 'hot' to handle for an election year and too devastating against Governor Brown and Attorney General Mosk. I talked to the Chief Investigator for the Committee yesterday for an hour and am to meet him in Los Angeles next week for further consultation. Confidentially, I can state that he is 100% on our side." [The Chief Investigator was Richard E. Combs.]

This admission by Talbert legitimately calls into question just how "impartial" the "investigation" actually was and it helps explain the numerous errors and mis-statements contained in the CSR. Significantly, the FBI arrived at very different conclusions about the JBS as early as 1959 and 1960.

There is an obvious explanation for this discrepancy which can be understood by considering the methodology employed by the Burns Subcommittee.

(1) The California investigation was begun in June 1961 and was completed the first week of April 1962. It was primarily limited to the state of California during that time period. The CSR was published in June 1963.

(2) Robert Welch stated that the JBS avoided publicity during its formative period. Serious news coverage about the JBS did not begin until July 1960 but that coverage was almost entirely in midwestern newspapers (in Illinois and Wisconsin).

(3) National news reports about the JBS did not commence until March-April 1961 - just a couple months before the California Subcommittee began its hearings. That national news coverage was predominantly focused upon the most sensational statements made by Welch in his unpublished manuscript about President Eisenhower as well as on Welch's dire statements regarding the status of our internal security.

(4) The Burns Subcommittee formed its conclusions about the JBS based, primarily, upon affidavits submitted by JBS members in California and from review of JBS literature. There has never been any explanation regarding how JBS members were selected to provide affidavits nor is there any way to determine if the limited number of selected members were representative of JBS membership as a whole (either in California or nationally).

(5) More importantly, most of the factual evidence regarding JBS connections to racial and religious bigots was not being reported by our media during this early period - particularly since **most JBS members never even announced that they were members!**

(6) **BY CONTRAST:** FBI conclusions about the JBS were based upon a much longer period of inquiry (starting 6 weeks after the JBS was formed, i.e. starting in January 1959) and FBI files included numerous reports regarding racial and religious bigots who attached themselves to the JBS.

In addition, hundreds of concerned citizens (including JBS members) contacted the FBI to report their experiences and contacts with the JBS. The FBI also received intelligence reports about the JBS from other government entities - including military intelligence (such as G-2 Army Intelligence, and ONI = Office of Naval Intelligence) along with reports from prominent conservatives who had personal knowledge about Robert Welch and about the JBS. **One such individual was former FBI informant Herbert Philbrick, of "I Led Three Lives" fame. Philbrick knew Robert Welch personally and he was also a Home Chapter member of the JBS.**

(7) **Significantly**, Philbrick told the FBI in January 1961 that based upon his contacts with JBS National Council member Revilo Oliver in 1959, that he (Philbrick) considered Oliver to be **"an extremist in anticommunist feelings and violently anti-Semitic."** [FBI-HQ file 65-45027, serial #29, 2/1/61 memo from F.J. Baumgardner to FBI Assistant Director Alan H. Belmont, page 2, which is in the FBI HQ file on Revilo P. Oliver; also, in FBI-HQ file 62-104401 on JBS, serial #unrecorded, but just after serial #621].

Unlike the California Subcommittee, the FBI had access to contextual information from classified information appearing in thousands of its investigative files along with reports from hundreds of its informants inside both legitimate and subversive organizations plus contacts with city, county, state, and federal law enforcement agencies across the United States.

(8) Although a copy of the CSR was sent to the FBI, there was no direct contact between the Chief Counsel of the Burns Subcommittee (Richard Combs) and the FBI. Consequently, the CSR was NOT informed by any sort of information-sharing between the FBI and the California Subcommittee. Nor does the CSR seem to have been informed by newspaper coverage about the JBS in other states. Incidentally, during the time period we are discussing, most major newspapers did not have a published index to their articles with one major exception (the *New York Times*).

## SECTION 2= WHAT DID THE CALIFORNIA SUBCOMMITTEE ACTUALLY SAY IN 1963?

Readers will notice that Alex Newman's two articles defending the JBS (in 2017 and 2019) made highly selective use of favorable quotations about the JBS from the 1963 California Subcommittee Report.

However, Mr. Newman deliberately chose to ignore or hide all the Subcommittee's critical comments - which resulted in the Chairman of the Subcommittee (State Senator Hugh M. Burns) setting the record straight on several occasions when he was asked about the 1963 Report (see pertinent comments by Burns quoted previously above.)

This next section will present some additional comments made by the Subcommittee which Alex Newman doesn't seem to care about. As previously noted, readers must keep in mind the limited time-frame and scope of the Subcommittee's investigation.

In some cases, I will add pertinent notes.

PAGE NUMBER	1963 COMMENT
2	"Our sole interest in the John Birch Society must go to the question of whether the Society is un-American."
3	<p>"Our study is based on a wide range of newspaper descriptions of the John Birch Society, from the restrained treatment by Gene Blake in the <i>Los Angeles Times</i> to the somewhat more critical articles in the <i>Santa Barbara News-Press</i>."</p> <p>"...we have secured affidavits and signed statements from 91 people, and we have reports from agents who attended chapter meetings of the Society."</p> <p><b>NOTE:</b> The JBS was highly critical of both the <i>Los Angeles Times</i> and the <i>Santa Barbara News-Press</i> series of articles.</p> <p>The publisher of the <i>Santa Barbara News-Press</i> (Thomas M. Storke) was awarded the 1962 Pulitzer Prize "For his forceful editorials calling public attention to the activities of a semi-secret organization known as the John Birch Society."</p>

3	<p>“Our own investigation, while necessarily involving the national origin and development of the movement, will be otherwise limited to its operations in California.”</p>
6	<p>“It is difficult indeed to reconcile the accusations made in <i>The Politician</i> by Mr. Welch with the records of John Foster Dulles and his brother Allen in their fight against the world Communist movement.”</p> <p><b>NOTE:</b> In November 1964, FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover declared:</p> <p>“Personally, I have little respect for the head of the John Birch Society since he linked the names of former President Dwight D. Eisenhower, the late John Foster Dulles, and former CIA Director Allen Dulles with communism.” [FBI-HQ file 62-104401, serial #2381, 11/20/64]</p>
53	<p>“As this movement steadily becomes larger it finds itself facing the problems that inevitably beset any organization of national proportions that is sustained on a high degree of emotionalism. As efforts are made to recruit more members...there is an increasing probability that among the new members will be a fringe of unstable chauvinist people who are prone to accept as accurate the most irresponsible charges of Communist activity. This is the sort of person who is quick to accuse an innocent liberal of being a Communist; and of forever damning anyone who was trapped into joining a Communist front group. Some of these members have been making accusations that are impossible to sustain, and as a result have found themselves facing legal actions for libel and slander.”</p> <p><b>NOTE:</b> Successful defamation lawsuits against JBS members were filed and won in Minnesota, Washington, Texas, and Illinois.</p> <p>In 1964, the Birch Society’s CPA firm (Spark, Mann, and Company) appended the following note to its 12/31/64 balance sheet on the JBS:</p> <p>“At December 31, 1964, the Society was named as defendant in various lawsuits aggregating \$9,300,000 for punitive and compensatory damages alleged to have resulted from circulation of unfavorable material by the Society or its members and from conspiracy which resulted in false arrest. These lawsuits are still pending and the extent to which the Society may become liable, if any, is not now ascertainable.”</p> <p>The Birch Society has the "distinction" of being the only national conservative "educational" organization to have lost an historic precedent-setting defamation lawsuit (which changed American libel law) after the JBS <u>falsely</u> described Chicago lawyer Elmer Gertz in an article it published in its monthly magazine as “a Communist fronter” and a “Leninist” who was engaged in a “conspiracy” against the Chicago police.</p> <p>After 14 years of litigation, including two different jury trials, numerous appeals, and review by the U.S. Supreme Court, the JBS paid Gertz \$100,000 in compensatory damages and \$300,000</p>

	<p>in punitive damages for malice. Because the JBS appealed the initial decision, their final payment (including accrued interest) was almost \$500,000 (which is about \$2,175,177 in 2019 dollars). Punitive damages are only allowed in libel actions when “malice” can be shown. Malice, in legalese, refers to “reckless disregard for truth” arising from evil intent and a desire to inflict injury, harm, or suffering.</p> <p>As one Appeals Court observed about the JBS article on Gertz:</p> <p>“There was more than enough evidence for the jury to conclude that this article was published with utter disregard for the truth or falsity of the statements contained in the article about Gertz.” [U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit, No. 81-2483, <i>Elmer Gertz v. Robert Welch, Inc.</i>, 6/16/82, page 20].</p>
61	<p>“The accusations he [Welch] made in <i>The Politician</i> in 1954 are shared by few of his followers, but he has since made other declarations that are as irresponsible and insusceptible of proof.”</p> <p><b>NOTE:</b> There is no actual evidence to support the Subcommittee’s conclusion that “few” followers of Welch agreed with his evaluation of Eisenhower.</p> <p>Welch boasted that only a handful of JBS members ever left the Society because of what he wrote about Eisenhower. Furthermore, Welch used his “<i>private letter</i>” as a recruitment tool for the JBS in 1959 and 1960 to persuade prospective members to join the JBS after reading and believing the accusations made by Welch in <i>The Politician</i>.</p> <p>In 2002, the JBS reprinted <i>The Politician</i> and described it on the back cover of this new edition as “the most devastating expose of the last century” because it “tells the bitter, but little-known truth” about our postwar history and Eisenhower's role in that history AND the back-cover statement concludes:</p> <p>“But most importantly, <i>The Politician</i> exposes that ‘conspiracy of gangsters’ which even now is setting America’s foreign and domestic policy.”</p>
61	<p>Referring to Welch, the Subcommittee predicted: “...if he continues to make sensational and insupportable charges, he will alienate rank and file loyalty. There is no doubt that such statements have rendered the Society vulnerable to much legitimate criticism.”</p>

### SECTION 3 = WHAT DID THE CALIFORNIA SUBCOMMITTEE SAY IN 1965?

In 1965, the California Subcommittee updated its findings concerning the Birch Society. Birchers like Alex Newman NEVER provide this information (for obvious reasons).

PAGE NUMBER	1965 COMMENT
171	<p>"In 1963 we devoted sixty-one pages of our report to the John Birch Society. Much of the report was highly critical, but because we did not find the Society subversive, we were accused in some quarters of having given it a thick whitewashing. It was natural to expect that the extreme Right would view the report with favor, the extreme Left with disfavor and that the John Birch Society would utilize the favorable statements and ignore our more pointed criticisms."</p>
171	<p>Referring to Welch's "private letter" entitled <i>The Politician</i>:</p> <p>"In this extraordinary document Welch made the accusations that described President Eisenhower, John Foster Dulles, and other high members of our government as either Communists or Communist dupes. We characterized these and similar assertions contained in this 1954 Welch letter as not only ridiculous, but entirely unsupported by proof and as statements that the members of the John Birch Society as a whole had repudiated."</p> <p><b>NOTE:</b> The last sentence by the Subcommittee is not accurate. Only a small number of JBS officials ever repudiated Welch's accusations in <i>The Politician</i> and on October 31, 1963, Welch published his so-called "private letter". Also, Welch stated several times that very few JBS members ever resigned after reading his "letter".</p> <p>The Subcommittee then continued its criticism:</p> <p>"The private circulation of <i>The Politician</i> in the form of a multi-paged letter in 1954 is one thing, because it was then the work of one man, was circulated to his close friends and acquaintances only, and there was no John Birch Society in existence at that time. But its re-publication late in 1963...is something else again, and in our opinion merits the most serious criticism."</p> <p><b>NOTE:</b> This comment reflects a fundamental misunderstanding by the Subcommittee. Welch <u>was</u> the JBS. His ideas were the official ideology of the JBS from its inception. JBS members did not vote to determine JBS policies or procedures or positions on public policies nor did they vote to choose or change their leaders.</p>
174	<p>"According to reliable sources, we would estimate that the Society has grown so rapidly that it has attracted a lunatic fringe that is now assuming serious proportions. We find very little anti-Negro sentiment among the members, but we do find a growing incidence of anti-Semitism, although the Society as a whole is far from anti-Semitic."</p> <p><b>NOTE:</b></p> <p>Obviously, it would not be possible to perceive a "dangerous increase of anti-Semitism" unless it had been previously noticed as well.</p> <p>With respect to their comment about "very little anti-Negro sentiment", it should be remembered that the White Citizens</p>



	<p>Council movement, and other white supremacist groups, did not have much of a presence in California.</p> <p>However, <u>many</u> members of the White Citizens Councils movement around the country (including several of its most senior leaders) <u>were</u> JBS members and many other white supremacist organizations endorsed and recommended the Birch Society (see further discussion below). [<b>NOTE</b>: In California, the organizer of the White Citizens Council of Los Angeles in June 1964 (Kent H. Steffgen) <u>and</u> the President of the Los Angeles chapter (Clyde G. Reynolds) were both JBS members.]</p>
174	<p>“It has, as we predicted, been beset by an influx of emotionally unstable people, some of whom have been prosecuted in the courts for their hoodlum tactics in disrupting meetings and heckling speakers with whom they disagree...We are more critical of the Society now than we were [in the 1963 Report] for the reason that it has, in our opinion, merited such criticism by reason of its activities as exemplified by the irresponsible articles by a member of its National Council, the re-publication of <i>The Politician</i>, the inexcusable actions of its minority of irresponsible members, and dangerous increase of anti-Semitism among a minority of the membership.”</p>

## RACIST ENDORSEMENTS OF, AND CONNECTIONS TO, THE BIRCH SOCIETY

As previously noted, the California Subcommittee focused all of its attention upon JBS operations in California.

One can only wonder how their conclusions about the JBS might have changed if they had more knowledge about JBS associations with, and employment of, indisputable bigots. A few examples are discussed below.

An exhaustive compilation of such associations is included in chapter 3 of my Report on “*Racism and the John Birch Society*” here:

<https://sites.google.com/site/aboutxr/home/jbs-racism3>

**EXAMPLE:** The *Dallas TX Times-Herald* newspaper published an article about the Birch Society in its March 26, 1961 issue – which made the following observation:

“Rev. Carey McDaniel, key figure in the White Citizens Council of Dallas, a white supremacy group, was lavish in his praise of the Birch Society when *The Times Herald* questioned him. ‘God bless all John Birch members’ he said. ‘Please say that the White Citizens Council is backing them 100 percent. I am thinking of joining.’”

Similar sentiments were expressed by JBS member Rev. James Parker Dees of Statesville NC. Dees was President of the North Carolina Defenders of States’ Rights, Inc. The Defenders was organized to perpetuate segregation and Jim Crow laws in North Carolina.

Dees owned more than 1% of stock in Robert Welch, Inc., the publishing arm of the Birch Society. Dees also was a member of his local White Citizens Council and he served on the Editorial Board of the national publication of the Citizens Councils of America.

According to Rev. Dees: “I think Gerald L.K. Smith is the greatest patriot in this country today. He is a profound Christian. I know him personally, and I have a deep respect for

him...I feel like there are good Jews and bad Jews; to Mr. Smith they're all bad. I've seen a lot of evidence that seems to substantiate his contentions.

JBS National Council member Dr. Thomas Parker was the President of his local White Citizens Council chapter in Greenville SC. Medford Evans was a JBS Coordinator in Louisiana and Mississippi and a regular contributor to the JBS magazine, *American Opinion*. He also served as the Editor of the national Citizens Council magazine.

William J. Simmons was Executive Director of Citizens Councils of America and a JBS member. He also was Administrator of the Association of Citizens Councils of Mississippi.

During World War II, Simmons was discharged from the Navy as a security risk because of his association with Nazi groups in Europe.

The following quote is from FBI-HQ file 105-34237-33, serial #57, page 17, which is a 1/29/63 memo from SAC New Orleans to J. Edgar Hoover:

“Information contained in Bureau file captioned '*WILLIAM JAMES SIMMONS, Administrator of Citizens Councils of Mississippi, Racial Matters*', Bureau file 157-817, New Orleans file 157-848, indicated that Simmons has a history of psychopathic state of schizoid type and was subject to strong emotional outbursts, temper tantrums, which finally resulted in his becoming catatonic. In this catatonic state, he had auditory visual hallucinations and lost his vision. Bureau case file entitled '*WILLIAM JAMES SIMMONS, Internal Security-G*,' New Orleans file 100-5208, contained information regarding the above mentioned psychopathic history of SIMMONS and indicated that during 1942, SIMMONS was disgruntled with the Government of the United States and Britain for their failure to realize his ability as a potential intelligence officer and had threatened to commit sabotage all over the country.”

Page 19 also observes that: “Obviously an organization with such an individual in leadership capacity has a potential for violence.”

Simmons was also a member of the Silver Legion of America, commonly known as the Silver Shirts, which was an underground American fascist organization founded by William Dudley Pelley that was headquartered in Asheville, North Carolina.

In 1963, Simmons stated during an interview that black Americans had different morals and were promiscuous by nature and should not be entitled to vote. [See FBI-New Orleans file 100-5208 on Simmons; Also see: FBI-HQ file 105-34237, serial #32 which is the FBI HQ file on the Citizens Councils movement.] Louis W. Hollis was a former JBS Coordinator in the Pittsburgh PA area. He then became Business Manager and later Executive Secretary of Citizens Councils of America.

For dozens of other examples regarding racists who joined the JBS and who often were also paid speakers and writers for the JBS, see the Chronology which is appended to chapter 3 of my online report on “*Racism and the John Birch Society*”

<https://sites.google.com/site/aboutxr/home/jbs-racism3>

**NOTE:** Mr. Newman has previously written articles which recommended another California “*investigation*” of the JBS which was conducted by Efficiency Research Bureau of Anaheim CA.

However, Newman did not do his homework so he apparently doesn't know that the ERB “*investigation*” was fraudulent. For details see Chapter 12 of my JBS Report: <https://sites.google.com/site/aboutxr/home/erb>